

REMARKS

Claims 1-8, 11, 12, 14-16 and 19-26 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, independent claims 1, 14 and 22 are amended for better clarity (see the specification at, for example, Fig. 1). Claim 3 is canceled in view of the Office Action's objection to claim 13.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration (as the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution); and (c) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

The Office Action objects to claim 13. Claim 13 is canceled. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to claim 13 is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3, 14-16 and 22-26 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over JPA 2001-284725 to Kondo ("Kondo"); rejects claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kondo in view of Yoshikawa et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,154,479, thereafter "Yoshikawa"); rejects claims 5, 7, 8 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kondo in view of JPA 63-007674 to Kakimoto ("Kakimoto"); rejects claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kondo in view of JPA 2000-076682 to Kondo ("Kondo-II"); rejects claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kondo in view of Kakimoto and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,706,101 to Nakamura et al. ("Nakamura"); and rejects claims 19-21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kondo in view of JPA 06-151972 to Aoyama ("Aoyama"). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1, 14 and 22 are amended, as outlined above, to recite "a diameter of a bottom surface of the base member being smaller than a diameter of the top surface of the

pillar portion." The applied references, either individually or in combination, do not disclose or suggest this feature.

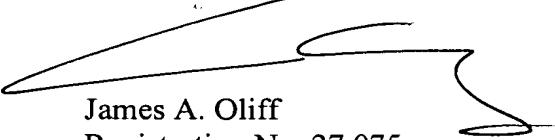
In particular, Kondo discloses a device having a contact layer 105 and a pillar section 110. See Fig. 1 and paragraphs 0032 and 0033. It appears that the bottom surface of the contact layer 105 has a diameter that is equal to that of the top surface of the pillar section 110. Kondo does not disclose or suggest a diameter of a bottom surface of a base member that is smaller than a diameter of a top surface of a pillar portion. Therefore, Kondo does not disclose or suggest the subject matter recited in claims 1, 14 and 22.

The other applied references, Yoshikawa, Kakimoto, Kondo-II, Nakamura and Aoyama, do not supply the subject matter lacking in Kondo. Therefore, the applied references, either individually or in combination, do not disclose or suggest the subject matter recited in claims 1, 14 and 22, and claims 2-8, 11, 12, 15, 16, 19-21 and 23-26 depending therefrom. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-8, 11, 12, 14-16 and 19-26 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and §103(a) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-8, 11, 12, 14-16 and 19-26 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Gang Luo
Registration No. 50,559

JAO:GXL/brp

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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